

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

April 27, 2007

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John Boehner
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Minority Leader Boehner,

We write to seek your support for significant funding for type 1 diabetes research as well as type 2 diabetes treatment and prevention programs for minority communities, particularly American Indians and Alaska Natives (AI/AN) who suffer in disproportionate numbers from diabetes. We believe that an enhanced federal investment in these areas will have a profound impact in lives and money saved.

As you know, diabetes places a tremendous economic burden on our country, costing over \$132 billion annually and accounting for one out of every three Medicare dollars. Diabetes is the leading cause of kidney failure, new adult blindness, and amputation. It is a major risk factor for heart disease and stroke. What is worse - the number of people diagnosed with the disease has increased steadily over recent years. It is estimated that one out of every three children born in the year 2000 will develop diabetes.

Diabetes also results in an enormous personal toll on individuals and families. Patients require daily administration of life-sustaining insulin in the form of injections or via an insulin pump. They must also carefully monitor their food intake and physical activity in order to manage the disease. Even with continuous and vigilant disease management, patients are still susceptible to developing serious, long-term complications. Diabetes and its complications can shorten average life expectancy by up to 15 years.

Minority communities, including Native Americans and Alaska Natives, are particularly impacted by diabetes. Indian Health Service (IHS) statistics show that among AI/AN populations during the period 1990-2004, the incidence of diabetes among 15-19 year olds increased 128% and increased 77% among children less than 15 years old.

Despite these alarming statistics, federal investment into diabetes prevention and treatments has been successful and we must continue to invest in programs that are delivering results. Some advances include unlocking the mysteries that surround the genetic and environmental causes of type 1 diabetes, such as:

- In families that have one member with type 1 diabetes, researchers can now identify with reasonable accuracy those additional family members who are at increased risk for developing type 1 diabetes, paving the way for early intervention.
- A new therapy, supported by federal funds, has been shown in human clinical trials to stabilize or reverse the progression of the disease, demonstrating for the first time that clinical course of type 1 diabetes can be altered.

- Advancements have been made in genomics that may help identify pertinent environmental triggers of the disease, including those related to specific viruses or dietary practices.
- Extensive collections of biological samples have been assembled from people with type 1 diabetes and their families, which provide a platform for developing new hypotheses or testing possible new therapies for type 1 diabetes using human samples.

These are just a few examples of how a strong federal investment in diabetes research is yielding real results for many people. Additionally, these critical discoveries are enabling scientists to work with industry to develop pharmaceuticals to temporarily stabilize the immune attack of type 1 diabetes and to treat diabetic retinopathy; to make advances in islet cell transplantation; and bring the field closer to the creation of an "artificial pancreas."

In the AI/AN population, federally-supported treatment and prevention programs are also showing real results in addressing the growing burden of type 2 diabetes. For example:

- Mean A1C levels – the measure of how well a patient has been controlling his/her blood sugar levels - have decreased by 1%. According to the CDC, in general, every percentage point drop in A1C reduces the risk of devastating and costly microvascular complications (eye, nerve, kidney) disease by 40%.
- Mean cholesterol rates and blood pressure levels have decreased, and the number of people with diabetes screened for kidney disease, eye and foot disease has increased. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Diabetes Cost-Effective Study Group found that screening and early treatment of diabetes reduces the lifetime occurrence of kidney failure by 25%, blindness by 35% and lower-extremity amputation by 22%.

We urge you to work with us this year to significantly fund type 1 diabetes research and type 2 diabetes treatment and prevention programs for American Indian and Alaska Native populations. In doing so, we can capitalize on the research opportunities that exist and accelerate our timeline to a cure and continue to make positive advances in addressing the significant burden diabetes places on these communities.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue.

Sincerely,



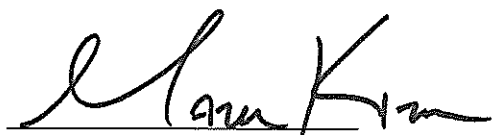
Diana DeGette
Member of Congress



Michael N. Castle
Member of Congress



Xavier Becerra
Member of Congress



Mark Steven Kirk
Member of Congress

Chris Smith

Joseph C. Smith

Ralph M. Hall

Lamar Smith

Ed Whifford

Wally Whor

Tim Holden

Gene Buchanan

John Longfellow

Frank A. Robison

Bob Filner

Dale Hovley

Marion Prichard

Bennie A. Thompson

Jack

Harry E. Mitchell

Shirley Jackson

Burton Lee

Dennis J. Kurish

Tammy Balch

Wichit Thompson

Ti Zi

~~Sam Hae~~

Joe Courtney

Ron Klein

Mike Rose

Rodney Alexander

John Byrne

Jay McRay

Melissa L. Bean

Tim Murphy

Mark Ryan (MC)

~~Carl Hoff~~

Michaela

Tim Walby

John A

Stephanie Sandlin

Henry Cuellar

~~for~~

John Lewis

Zoe Lofgren

Mary Bono

John Sullin

Steve Chabot

Jane Cunningham

Ron Paul

Max Shobe

Willie Luper

Al Swift

Sam Cole

Jim Thornburg

Rick Zussman

Debbie Wasserman Schultz

Michael T. McCaul

Hyd Doggett

Arturo Davis

John Berman

Carlson

Dan O. Matsui

Pete Stark

Jim Marshall

David Davis

~~AS~~ Sher

K. J. Hill 27

Ken Brady

Carolyn McCarthy

Mark Udall

Brian Higgins

John Culberson

JP Mu

Peter Roskam

Rita Thurlo

Jim Langevin

Jan C. Patu

John A. Chafe

Don Schmidt

Chip Pickering

U.S. Fed

Albert R. Lynn

Rafael

Chuck G. J. J.

John Davis

John Bruck

Christopher P. Conroy

William J. Schwartz

John P. John

Shelley Berkeley

Heather Wilson

Wm. Lacy Clay

Cris Wynn

John Boddy Ford

Don

Ed Palmer

T. J. J.

Al

Mike Day

Andrew

Jim McKinnon

Steve Farn

John J.

Shelley Moore Capito

Raul M. Grijalva

Bruce A. Braley

Tom Uhl

Hilda L. Solis

Jan Ins

Earl Blumenreich

Phil Abernethy

Ben Chandler

Carol Shea-Power

Eddie Bivens Johnson

Dave Loebeck

Pete Sessions

Verna Buchanan

John Boozman

Kevin

Susan Davis

Joe Bova

Tim J. Wirth

Michael E. Caproni

Steve Chen

Joe Lestak

John B. Rasmussen

Dean Heller

Jette D. Clarke

Todd R. Platts

Paul J. Meyer

Jan Stankovic

Ruth Holt

Jim M. Demott

Judy Biggert

J. MacLeod

Kendrick B. Meek

Geoff Jarvis

Lois Capps

John W. Oliver

Barbara Cubin

Jo Ann Davis

Chang Sheng

Tom Hill

Herb Ellison

Steve Kogen

Dog Warden

Sam Farr

Allen Bayd

Louise Vancley

Gwen Kroore

Vic Snyder

Ron Kind

Tim Ryan

Hank Johnson

Bobby Scott

Joe Dangle

Linda J. Satch

Mozie K. Hiroko

Sander Lein

Jim Mathur

Peter Welch

Leonard L. Baswell

Jason Altmine

For 7 Solera

Bob E. Crawford

Op Leger

Ammonium

After Peace

Gum Bitter

Ernest O.

Arin Van Hellen

Cathy McHorn-Rodgers

Erin Carver

Michael W. Honda

David Lipinski

Bob H.

Michael H. H. H.

R. A. H.

C. A. Dutch Ruppertsberger

William A. H. H.

Erin Falconer

Ernest A. H.

Stephen P. H. H.

Julia Carson

Tom Latham

Ruben Hinajosa

Bill Parrott.

Ed Pastor

Howard Cobb

Louise M Slaughter

Tom Lantos

Robert E. And

Carol D. Pody

To Bonner

Shirley E. Watson

Bert Gordon

Vernon J. Ehlers

Frank Hutton

Ben Cammer

Carl G. K. Mee

Edward G. Markey

Solomon J. Outy

Don Jorg

Don. J. Jorg

Nathan Deal

Pete P. P. P.

Danmy K. Davis

Erin L. Engle

David P. P.

Robert W. W.

Harry L. Ackerman

Wayne T. Gilchrist

Spencer P. P.

Jim Moran

Benny Frank

Samuel Woolsey

Earl Blumenfeld

Gene Taylor

Ken Calvert

Walt Blumenthal

Elaine

Peter Hochstetler

Eliza Cummings

Howard L. Berman

Ronald Mayne

J. Saxton

Richard Shaw

Bill Red

Joe Pater.

Ken Quigley

Samuel A. Murphy

Rosa L. DeLauro

Frank Lautenberg

Steven D. Roth

J. Chafee

Marion Berry

Andi Rahal

Elton Gallegly

Dan Burton

Frank D. Lucas



Paul Hargill

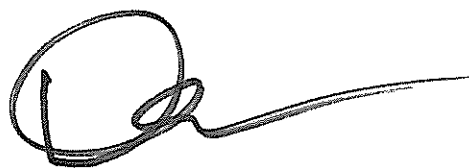
Nita M. Lowey

Phil English

Jerrold Nadler

Steve Mann

Carine Brown



~~Gregory W. Meeks~~

Mark W. Warner

Jim Davis

Roger Wicker

Ben Ray Lujan

Howard B. "Buck" McKeon

Carolyn B. Maloney

Jim Oberstar

J. C. McAllister

Chas. A. McAllister

Chief Edwards

Bill Delahunt